

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1094  
By Maggart

A RESOLUTION to recognize the Reverend Peter James Whalen  
on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those venerable members of the clergy, who, through their great capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, have enriched the lives of the people of their respective communities and who have distinguished themselves as religious leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Peter James Whalen is one such estimable person who has served with distinction for seventeen years as rector of St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Donelson; his life and ministry affirm his commitment to the principles of faith, perseverance, and hard work, and he will soon be taking a much deserved retirement; and

WHEREAS, Peter James Whalen is a native of Hartford, Connecticut; his father was a career Navy man, and the family moved some twenty-seven times during his first twenty-five years of life; and

WHEREAS, Peter Whalen was educated in Florida, Newfoundland, Japan, and South Texas. He completed his major studies in Philosophy, Theology, and Scripture at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio, St. Mary's University, and the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas; at every opportunity he takes advantage of continuing education in Pastoral Studies, and in the summer of 1999, he enjoyed a three-month sabbatical in the Holy Land; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Whalen has been a priest for thirty-nine years, the first fifteen of which were in the Roman Catholic Church, and he feels a sense of accomplishment and peace in the different areas in which he has been called to serve; and

WHEREAS, "Father Peter" is blessed with a great and loving heart for God's work, and St. Philip's Episcopal Church has benefited from his wisdom and love in innumerable ways. During the past seventeen years, the St. Philip's Episcopal Church family has grown by 26

percent, and the facilities have expanded with the construction of a gymnasium and a Family Life Center to remind everyone that we are called to health not only in mind and spirit, but in body as well; and

WHEREAS, Fr. Peter is remembered for implementing the popular St. Philip's traditional Seder Meal, offered each year during Holy Week; in addition, he has mentored seven deacons in training for the priesthood in the Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, with the members of the parish family, he has been committed to making St. Philip's a haven for those seeking a place to worship, while enabling the parishioners to discover the goodness given to each of them by God; and

WHEREAS, throughout his exemplary tenure at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, the Reverend Peter Whalen has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and an exceptional asset to his community, including his service as the President of the Ministerial Association; a member of the Board of the Donelson/Hermitage Chamber of Commerce; President of the Tennessee Association of Churches; Leader of Boy Scout Troop 342, which is sponsored by the parish; a member of the Ethics Committee at Summit Medical Center; and Cub Master of Cub Scout Pack #84 at Holy Rosary Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, admired and respected by his colleagues, parishioners, and community alike, Fr. Peter is currently the Ecumenical Officer of the Diocese of Tennessee, and served on both the Standing Committee and Bishop and Council of the Diocese in giving guidance and direction to the Episcopal Church in Middle Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, "Father Peter" is strongly committed to the highest ideals of family values, and is most grateful for the tremendous love and companionship that he shares with his beloved wife of twenty-two years, Barbara, who was formerly a Roman Catholic nun in the order of the Sisters of Divine Providence; together, they are the proud parents of two wonderful children: Christi, who at age nineteen is a student at Lambuth University in Jackson, Tennessee; and Christopher, 13, who is an eighth grade student at Holy Rosary Academy; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Whalen's outstanding career as a dynamic and compassionate religious leader and an active civic leader is directly attributable to his reliance on God's grace,

his dedication to the time-honored values of hard work and common sense, and his uncommon ability to relate to people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, recently honored as part of the “Star-Spangled Salute” sponsored by the Donelson Station Senior Center, he was recognized for his many years of volunteer service to the Community Pastor’s Association and to the Donelson-Hermitage Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Whalen is retiring from his position as Rector of St. Philip’s Episcopal Church on June 4, 2006, which is not only Pentecost Sunday, but also the date of St. Philip’s 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, the Reverend Peter Whalen has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, and the members of this legislative body are proud to recognize this committed Christian, dynamic church leader, and eminent citizen of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we extend to the Reverend Peter James Whalen our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors, and our gratitude for his unwavering dedication to God, the members of St. Philip’s Episcopal Church, and his community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.